

CAREER FOCUS

Can you explain the Base of Preference Program?

BY MASTER SGT. DAVID HALVORSON
TEAM KIRTLAND
career assistance advisor

The Base of Preference program offers outstanding assignment opportunities, and affects both first-term and second-term airmen.

This week we'll focus on the first-term.

The first-term Airman Base of Preference program is a reenlistment incentive under the Career Airman Reenlistment Reservation System (CAREERS) Retraining Program (see Air Force Instruction 36-2606, *Reenlistment in the United States Air Force*). In conjunction with reenlistment, first-term Airmen may request a permanent change of station base of preference or a base of preference to remain in-place (base of preference in-place is only available to those in the continental U.S.).

This can be a powerful incentive to reenlist! First-

term Airmen may also request a base of preference in conjunction with reenlistment and retraining (see Air Force Instruction 36-2626, *Airman Retraining Program*).

Under the Base of Preference program, Airmen may request a permanent change of station to the continental U.S. or continental U.S. to continental U.S., or permanent change of station from overseas to continental U.S.

As well, an Airman in the continental U.S. may apply for a permanent change of station base of preference and an in-place base of preference at the same time.

A first-term Airman permanent change of station base of preference is *not* authorized from the continental U.S. to overseas, or overseas to overseas, since these assignments are made in accordance with overseas permanent change of station selection priorities.

Confused? Don't be, it's just a matter of talking with



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the right people.

For more information on the Base of Preference program and assignment process contact the Military Personnel Flight

customer service, 846-5660, go to <https://afas.afpc.randolph.af.mil> or call or e-mail your career assistance advisor at 846-6636 or david.halvorson@kirtland.af.mil.



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WINTER SAFETY

'Clear' roads can be dangerous

By Wayne Ragan

377th Air Base Wing, Chief of Safety

At any temperature -20 to +100 degrees, weather affects the roads and road conditions and can pose serious problems.

One of my earliest memories of vehicle safety is a lesson on black ice. Two circles later my dad's car was headed in the wrong direction and we were watching two other vehicles following in our path.

Vehicles are just not supposed to make circles like that.

After everyone stopped we walked back to see what happened, a patch of snow on the sunny side of the curve

had melted slightly, the water ran across the road, then as the sun left the roadway in the afternoon the water refroze, and an instant skating rink was formed.

Speed and inattention played a big part in this mishap. A little risk management would have prevented this almost tragic turn of events.

Take a couple of minutes to preplan your trip, how is the weather? Are there hazardous conditions forecast? Do you have emergency supplies the car can get real cold real quick. Have you let any one know where you are going and when you will return?

Little details like this could save your life and those you love.

FORUM

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846-4240



COL. HENRY L. ANDREWS, JR.
377th Air Base Wing commander

More gas price surveys

I am writing about the gasoline prices at the base service station. It has been my observation that the price of gasoline at the station pretty well always equals what the major service stations in town are charging. As an example, the price of gas on Kirtland AFB on Oct. 27 was \$1.49, while in town, numerous stations were well below that.

We are always reminded to shop on base and save. This is not always true. As far as I am concerned, whoever is running the service station is doing a disservice to the military.

Army and Air Force Exchange Service's charter is to offer a fair price for gasoline, not necessarily beat the prices of local competition.

To arrive at a competitive price, AAFES' policy was to survey nearby competitors each Monday, and set prices per gallon accordingly, normally equal to the lowest price surveyed. The prices you saw at the Shoppette on Oct. 27 were from the previous week's survey. However, the varying prices you quote in your letter reflect the adjustments local competitors make on a sometimes daily basis in an effort to attract customers. In order to be more responsive, AAFES will now conduct surveys three times each week to be more in line with prices offered locally.

If you happen to see a substantial difference between AAFES' and off base service station prices, we

invite you to notify the Shoppette manager so an out-of-cycle survey can be accomplished.

In the end, AAFES' mission is to generate reasonable earnings. We should all consider this a good thing, since earnings are returned to our customers through construction and modernization of exchange facilities, as well as support of base activities.

West side Shoppette hours

I am calling about the West Shoppette. The sign outside says that it is open 9 a.m.-2 p.m. on Saturday. It's 12:57 p.m. on Saturday and it is closed. I made a special trip to this side of base to get gas and so forth and they are already closed. This was really inconvenient for me. Why are they closed when the sign says that they are supposed to close at two?

Although the hours of operation for the west side Shoppette on Saturdays are posted as 9 a.m.-2 p.m. on Saturdays, AAFES had been closing the store entirely on any Saturday preceding a Monday holiday. The customer flow on three-day weekends did not financially support opening the store. There was a sign on the door stating the store was closed on the day you visited, but the sign was poorly placed and too small.

We will now remain open every Saturday from 9 a.m.-2 p.m. and we will test longer hours of operation. We also have "Pay at the Pump" capability, allowing you to get gas 24 hours a day, seven days a week with your Star Card or other major credit card.

We apologize for the inconvenience.

Finance phone system

I'm a little frustrated because I've been trying to reach the base finance office and after you go through a number of menus on their phone system, you finally get to one that says that everyone is busy, to please leave a message. Following that it states that you cannot leave a message at this time. There appears to be no other way of reaching these folks.

I've tried another number in the menu and that gets me to a 30-minute waiting line at Air Force Finance, wherever they are located.

The Kirtland Finance Customer Service Office has two customer service lines, 846-8045 and 846-6639, which are available to assist you. Our main menu options ensure you are transferred to a person who can handle your specific concern. If you don't select an option, the main

menu will repeat itself, allowing you to hear the options again.

Once you select an option, your call is transferred to a finance expert.

If all our people are busy when you call, the menu gives you the opportunity to leave a message.

During normal business hours, we have at least four individuals in finance customer service answering the phones. If all of our technicians are with another customer, the menu places you on hold until one of the technicians becomes available. If there are two customers waiting for the technicians, the menu transfers you to the message center.

Another option we offer is for you to use our e-mail at Finance@kirtland.af.mil. A technician will answer your e-mail question in less than 48 hours.

Vehicle storing

Why is the condition of a vehicle being stored in the vehicle storage lot of utmost importance?

People pursue different hobbies and there is nothing illegal or unethical about restoring and enjoying older cars. Sure, a few cars really have been abandoned in the storage lot after being stripped of valuable parts and I reported it.

I have a car being stored on base without the wheels on it, but I guarantee you that my cars will be road worthy long after those trailers have been buried in a landfill.

No one is paying to store a vehicle just to incur more expenses.

Thank you for contacting the Forum with your concerns regarding the comments made by another customer in the Oct. 3. You have been a valued customer and we appreciate your feedback.

Protect information

I worked for the Air Force for 22 years and I had never noticed my Social Security Account Number was on my identification card. A computer person told me that having your Social Security number on your ID card was dangerous because of identity theft. My driver's license used to have it, but they discontinued using it sometime back. My Social Security number on my ID card is dangerous; can you do something about it?

In 1967, DOD stopped using serial numbers and began using our Social Security Account Number as the sole personal identifier within financial and personnel data systems. We must disclose our Social Security number to receive certain

benefits. In fact, this is the law for military entitlements, including health care under any Uniformed Services program.

In this situation, DOD has concluded it is was safer to show our Social Security number on the ID card and ensure that those of us requesting access to services are indeed who we claim to be.

So, while there are risks to having our Social Security number on the ID card, the benefits of ensuring only authorized individuals receive access to government facilities and services outweigh those risks.

In the end, it is a critical, personal responsibility that we protect our ID cards at all times to keep unauthorized individuals from getting access to this information.

A normal Friday

There are a few things you can count on every Friday. One of them unfortunately, is reading yet another complaint in the Nucleus about the Commissary or BX. I however, have yet to have a negative experience in my three years here.

The notion that the Commissary and BX should have the lowest price on 100 percent of the items 100 percent of the time is nothing short of absurd. As with most government agencies I believe they do the best with the resources they have.

To the fine folks that work everyday to make our lives a little better, thank you!

Forum

We want your suggestions and comments concerning Kirtland AFB.

However, may we also suggest giving base agencies or the chain of command the chance to resolve your concern before calling Forum.

If you decide the Forum is the right answer, we don't print callers' names.

Customer service

Chapel, 846-5691
CE Help Desk, 846-8222
Commissary, 846-9586
Computer help, 846-5926
Energy wasting, 846-4633
Exchange Service, 266-9887
Family Services, 846-0741
Finance, 846-8045, 846-6639
Law Enforcement, 846-7926
Legal Services, 846-4217
Medical Clinic, 846-3406
Services Squadron, 846-1828

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